

This LISTING OF CLAIMS will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) In an on-line financial screening service, a method of searching a financial database, including data for a plurality of companies, and an intellectual property database, including data for a plurality of companies, in order to find securities matching user search criteria and relevant intellectual property, wherein the users access the database over the Internet, the method comprising:

searching the database for records matching financial search criteria defined by a user; and

relaxing at least some of the search criteria, until at least a required number of matching records are found, wherein the required number of matching records is never less than one; and

reporting the matching records to the user, including at least one item of data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the search criteria is suitable for being delimited between a minimum and maximum.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 3, wherein the method~~ In an on-line service, a method for screening financial investment opportunities, comprising the steps of:

searching a financial database, including data for a plurality of companies, for data records associated with at least one company based upon a financial search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;

searching an intellectual property database, including data for a plurality of companies, for data records associated with the at least one company based upon an intellectual property search criteria and retrieving the results thereof;

combining the results of the financial database searching step and the intellectual property database searching step to determine common results on a company basis;

~~further comprises the step of analyzing the number of common results on a company basis to determine if the number is greater than zero, and if not~~

~~relaxing the search criteria employed in at least one of the searching steps and rerunning the searches so as to obtain a non-zero number of common results;~~
and

depicting the combined results.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the step of relaxing the search criteria is accomplished without user intervention.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 ~~4~~, further including the step of maintaining the financial database data records and the intellectual property database records, wherein the step includes periodically launching an automated search of network resources to locate and update financial and intellectual property information; and

storing the updated information in the respective database.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the updated information includes:
at least one item of financial data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio, and
at least one item of intellectual property data selected from the group consisting of Patent Number, Inventor Name, Issue Date, Title, Inventor State,

Abstract, Inventor Country, Claim(s), Attorney or Agent, Description/Specification, Assignee Name, Assignee State, Assignee Country, Issued US Classification, International Classification, Application Serial Number, Application Date, Primary Examiner, Assistant Examiner, Parent Case Information, Related US App. Data, US References, Reissue Data Foreign References, Foreign Priority, PCT Information, Government Interest, and Application Type.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~3~~ 4, further including the step of constructing a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of constructing a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria is facilitated by the step of displaying a search construction interface to a user.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~11~~ 13, wherein said computer platform includes a client and a server interconnected by a network, and where the financial database and the intellectual property database are stored on devices accessible through said server.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~The system of claim 11,~~ A system for screening financial investment opportunities, comprising:

a computer platform responsive to user input including access to at least a financial database including data records associated with a plurality of companies and an intellectual property database including data records associated with a plurality of companies,;

programmable search software, operable by said computer platform, for searching the financial database for data records associated with at least one company based upon a financial search criteria and retrieving the results thereof for storage in a first memory, said programmable search function also being employed for searching the intellectual property database for data records associated with the at least one company based upon an intellectual property search criteria and retrieving the results thereof for storage in a second memory;

further including means for automatically relaxing search criteria employed by the programmable search software so as to obtain a non-zero number of search results;

search analysis software, operable by said computer platform, for combining the results of the financial database search and the intellectual property database search to determine common results; and
a display device for depicting the common results.

14. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 11 13, wherein said financial database includes records having at least one item of financial data selected from the group consisting of Stock Price, Price/Earnings Ratio, Current Ratio, Debt/Equity Ratio, Cash/Price ratio, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Earnings per Share Growth-1Yr, Insider Trades, Institutional Holdings %, Price/Book Ratio, and Price/Cash Flow Ratio, and

where said intellectual property database includes records having at least one item of intellectual property data selected from the group consisting of Patent Number, Inventor Name, Issue Date, Title, Inventor State, Abstract, Inventor Country, Claim(s), Attorney or Agent, Description/Specification, Assignee Name, Assignee State, Assignee Country, Issued US Classification, International Classification, Application Serial Number, Application Date, Primary Examiner, Assistant Examiner, Parent Case Information, Related US App. Data, US References, Reissue Data Foreign References, Foreign Priority, PCT Information, Government Interest, and Application Type.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 44 13, wherein said display device is suitable for the display of at least one user-selectable data item to assist with the construction of a search query having both financial search criteria and intellectual property search criteria.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)